

Faith & Community Micro-Grant Fund Guidance

January 2026

Slough CVS is a registered charity (1069086) and will be supporting the delivery of a Slough Faith Compact with Slough Borough Council and Community Partners in 2026, funded by UK Government.

We are looking to issue grants to support local voluntary and community groups to contribute to the development of a Faith Compact, a framework to strengthen collaboration between faith and community organisations and the council. Successful applicants are expected to support the drafting and formation of a Faith Compact for Slough – a key outcome of a Faith Forum held in July last year. (See Appendix 1 for more details on the discussion points, challenges and aims from the Faith Forum in July '25).

Voluntary and Community Sector groups are being asked to complete the funding application form which will be submitted to the funding panel. The funding panel will consist of key representatives from Slough CVS/ Community Rep, Slough Borough Council and Berkshire Healthcare NHS Foundation Trust.

Applicants can apply to receive a grant of up to £1,000 which will require to start **immediately** and be spent by 31st May 2026.

Please complete the grant applications to the best of your ability. If you would like advice, please contact funding@sloughcvs.org.uk

Who is providing the funding?

The funding comes from Slough Borough Council via UK Government, which is administered and monitored by Slough CVS.

Who can apply?

The Grants are open to all Slough Voluntary and Community groups that are constituted.

All applicants must have a constitution/ Articles of Association and bank account in the name of their group/ organisation.

How much can I apply for?

Applicants can apply to receive a grant of **up to £1,000**

What is the funding period?

The funding is for a maximum of 3 months, from March to May.



This is a short-term project, and successful applicants will be expected to start their projects immediately.

What won't we fund?

- A 'shortfall' in funding from a statutory agency
- Projects which have not demonstrated a clear need for what they are proposing
- Projects that do not meet the objective or purpose of this grant
- Political parties, lobbying and campaigning
- Individuals or Private limited companies
- The promotion of religion
- Capital equipment, for example vehicles, computers, furniture, and mobile phones for staff and volunteers
- Adaptations to rooms and buildings, for example permanently changing the fabric of a room or building for specific purpose of delivering a project or activity
- Overnight residential stays or residential camps

Key Priorities

We will give priority to applicants that can demonstrate they will work with, and have already established links with the Key Communities to meet the Aims and Key Priorities below:

Key Priorities	Example activity/ Project
Inclusion & Relationship Building	Activities that bring together diverse faith groups to share experiences, increase understanding and build positive relationships. <i>For example: Youth dialogues, community kindness actions, shared cultural celebrations, interfaith sports day, interfaith dialogue workshops promoting community cohesion, faith-in-action workshops, pop-up exhibitions, social media campaigns</i>
Building skills and leadership	Activities around training community members to lead activities, facilitate conversations <i>For example: Community Leadership training workshops, faith community champions programme, interfaith facilitation training, skills exchange sessions between faith groups, youth leadership development</i>
Faith Compact & Shared Activities	Collaborative projects that support Faith Compact development and delivery <i>For example: Peace pledges, interfaith advisory panel, shared community service projects, Women's interfaith group</i>

How will applications be assessed?



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All applications that are eligible will be independently scored by the panel. The panel will then meet to agree to the awards and provide feedback on unsuccessful applications. The Panel may ask for further information before making a decision.

Applications that meet the participant's needs and suggested priorities will be prioritised. The decision of the panel is final and there is no appeal process.

There are 3 scoring sections of the application form.

- About Your project - Questions 18 and 19
- Community impact - Questions 20 and 21
- Budget- Questions- Question 23

Scoring for each question will be between zero and four where zero is the lowest score and four is the highest. The scoring assessment is as follows.

Assessment Criteria	Score
Deficient – Response to the question significantly deficient or no response received.	0
Limited – Limited information provided, or a response that is inadequate or only partially addresses the question.	1
Acceptable – An acceptable response submitted in terms of the level of detail, accuracy and relevance.	2
Comprehensive – A comprehensive response submitted in terms of detail and relevance.	3
Outstanding – As comprehensive, but to a significantly better degree, or likely to result in increased quality, including improvement through innovation and strong likelihood of achieving great outcomes.	4

When would I receive the money?

If we make an offer of funding, this will be conditional on:

- Providing Due Diligence information, such as financial documents - bank account information
- Agree to provide an end of project evaluation report.

Once we have received this and you have signed the Funding Agreement, we make payment of the grant

What will I need to report on/ provide monitoring on?

You will be required to complete an end of project monitoring form. Examples of what you will be required to provide information on are as follows:

- **What did you do?** (E.g. What activities were run)



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- **Who did you reach?** (E.g. How many people have participated)
- **What worked?** (E.g. Short case studies, testimonials, photos)
- **What changed?** (E.g. Outcomes from the work completed)
- **What did you learn?** (E.g. What worked? Was it effective? What didn't work?)
- **How has your project supported the development of the Slough Faith Compact?**

Where can I find the Grant Application form?

The Grant application form can be found at: [Slough Faith Compact Microgrant Grant Application Form – Fill in form](#)

Your application can be completed and submitted via the online Grant application form.

When is the closing date for applications?

Deadline for Funding submissions is for midnight Sunday **22nd February 2026**

When will I know the outcome of my application?

Applicants can expect to hear the outcome of their application by **Friday 13th March 2026**

What if I have a question about the form?

If you have a question not covered in this guidance document, you can email funding@sloughcvs.org.uk

Appendix 1

Cohesion and faith forum scoping session – July 2025

1. Introduction

On 28th July 2025 a cohesion and faith partnerships scoping meeting took place at Slough Borough Council's Council Chambers. The meeting ran from 18:00-20:00 and was attended by approximately 25 community partners, faith partners, key officers and Members.

The purpose of this strategic meeting was to:

- Support development of a stakeholder group who can work together to develop an understanding of community sentiment, cohesion concerns and other emerging issues
- Help us collectively shape resident and partners communications, resident and partner engagement and other actions which may include developing work with specific communities or places
- Develop ongoing collaboration with the faith community, understand Slough's needs from a faith perspective and explore the development of a compact; whilst appreciating the conversation is much wider than the topic of cohesion

2. Strategic approach

Sonia Khan, Director of Strategy, Change and Resident Engagement and Tessa Lindfield, Executive Director of Public Health and Public Protection presented an initial strategic approach to strengthening community cohesion, that was shaped during the event:



The speakers stressed the council's ambition to develop a systematic way of connecting to the faith community, faith leaders and the faith-led community sector to:

- **Build a better understanding** of the different needs and inequalities across our faith communities and use this understanding to feed into and help deliver our strategic and operational objectives
- **Develop collaborative ways of working** with the faith sector to meet diverse needs and tackle the root causes of inequalities
- **Develop effective two-way dialogues** – enhancing understanding of lived experience and enabling Slough residents to shape our work
- **Build reach and establish clearer engagement methods** – proactively and reactively at times of crisis and civil emergency to ensure collective readiness and responsiveness

3. Interactive workshops

Interactive sessions were held with members of the community to identify local opportunities and future risks to cohesion, and explore the potential for the faith sector to collaborate with the council and partners to address emerging risks, strengthen resilience and cohesion.

A summary of the discussion is set out below. Core emerging themes included recognition of the value of the sector and its diversity, and the influence of external events on local relations. Key local challenges were identified, such as ensuring full representation given the diversity of Slough's communities and the faith sector, the impact of socio-economic inequality on different communities and the challenges to accessing local assets and support. A strong overarching theme emerged around the future role of the Council in collaboration with faith partners to address these challenges.

4. Key discussion points

4.1 Local context

Recognition of the faith sector's value

- The community is key to connecting with different cohorts – e.g. younger and older people, by activity type e.g. sport or education, linked to the role of social and economic assets (e.g. the trading estate), and future investment opportunities
- The faith sector plays a key role in reducing community tension, in prevention and early intervention - we need to recognise the costs and benefits more fully

Diversity within and between faith communities

- Faith groups are not one homogenous group
- A key risk was identified as labelling, misrepresenting views and influence
- The sector was understood as key to challenging negative perceptions e.g. fear of crime, perception of different faiths

External risk factors



- Faith communities in Slough often co-exist peacefully, but some have views that are diametrically opposed
- National events risk igniting local tensions e.g. recent increase in tension over asylum seekers
- General agreement that tensions are more likely to be driven from events outside of Slough
- National and local 'tribal' politics were identified as risk factors

4.2 Local challenges

Representation and inequality

- It was felt that roles and authorities of faith leaders can be very different – this needed to be better understood to ensure faith groups were collaborated with in the right way by the right partners
- Gaps in representation were identified e.g. across local Somali and Polish communities in terms of the event itself, and the council's existing communication and engagement channels
- Tension noted around how representative Members, MP and community representatives are of the groups they say they represent
- Council staff also seen as lacking diversity (inc. at the workshop)
- A critical risk was identified as complacency - Slough is seen as diverse, but there is little true representation of that diversity across key forums with influence

Access, assets and facilities

- The digital divide was identified as a key challenge re access to information
- Growing inequality was identified as a key future risk to increasing tensions in the immediate term
- Lack of community assets and impact of visible decline (e.g. town centre) on community wellbeing and cohesion viewed as core risk
- Access to space and facilities understood to be challenging – with potential to exacerbate tension e.g. parking
- Regeneration and transport investment presented both risk and opportunity (e.g. influx of commuters, Londoners priced out, impacts on local housing market)

4.3 Opportunities to consider

Economic opportunities, especially for young people

- Employment challenges can be addressed through Council apprenticeships and local people benefitting from Slough trading estate / SEGRO – links opportunity into the community

- Opportunity for young people to provide challenge to ways of working; opportunity to harness social and economic assets e.g. trading estate to address inequality and job creation
- Opportunity to create local prospects for residents to thrive e.g. harnessing local arts
- Future skills plan development essential to enable local people to access local employment
- Role for mentors in schools / young people / apprenticeships / skills is key
- Opportunity to celebrate local role models especially, for young people

The Council's future role

- Leadership - call for more open forums (e.g. Knowing Me, Knowing You event) to raise hope > cocreate future vision, raise ambition, and celebrate Slough's multiculturalism
- Key role for council to enable groups by removing barriers e.g. language or access to assets
- Opportunity to improve accessibility of Council services via community services
- EIAs should be broader to take into consideration wider community issues
- Council visibility re: officer support – named person/team needed
- Incorporation of faith sector needs to be in our strategic planning and planning policy
- Youth / advice centres and practical support are key – not enough Council investment here
- Need to see quicker follow-through and visible action from discussions like this to build community confidence
- Opportunity for council comms to play a stronger role e.g. to celebrate what is already happening – events, cultural offer, etc.
 - Scope to modernise council comms channels and branding to diversify reach – key role for social media, alongside word of mouth
 - Scope for joint comms channels with the faith sector

Collaboration opportunities to explore

- Promoting faiths and culture across Slough is key to enabling community sense of belonging, wellbeing, and is key to grappling with many other issues that affect Slough e.g. youth crime rates, ASB
- Scope for more creative use of existing assets e.g. green space, housing, an investment fund for young people / assets (ringfenced), faith festivals
- Access to different communities and opportunity to formalise collaboration through partnership working, council working groups, shared comms and engagement
- Scope for business / community collaboration opportunities to harness that access to young people (e.g. apprenticeships)
- There are national models for faith community engagement that could be adapted locally
- Opportunity to leverage local assets and anchor institutions e.g. mixed faith learning / opportunities are key to build interfaith relations
- Link between community groups to share how they support each other – e.g. creation of a quarterly forum



- Enhance two-way dialogue through creation of a compact and shared methods of communication
- Community directory to raise awareness of what is already here – bottom-up information sharing – must be a priority
- Developing our approach to understanding community dynamics and community tensions with community partners - including being able to gather insight on an ongoing basis and during times of crisis.

5. Next steps

The feedback and ideas from this event will now be integrated into the council's future communications and engagement plan, plans to refresh how the council works with its strategic partners as well as the development of future plans and strategies – from the Equalities Plan to the council's forthcoming Economic Development Strategy. For example, key opportunities currently being explored include how the council can collaborate with the faith sector and faith communities to cocreate and co-deliver Slough's future Vision 2050.

The council is currently undertaking mapping of Slough's communities and partners, and will continue to collaborate with faith partners to share information of community sentiment, cohesion concerns and emerging issues. Officers are also considering other specific recommendations, including the development of a compact with faith partners to formalise ways of working. Officers will be in touch with next steps to share intelligence, better understand Slough's diverse communities, and the different ways of collaborating with them, including the development of a community directory.

